

Remarks

Claims 1-13 and 14-22 are pending in the application and stand rejected. Claim 14 has been canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein.

Claim rejections

Section 101

Claims 1-9, 11-19, 21 and 22 were rejected under 35 USC 101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter. The Applicant respectfully traverses. Claim 1 recites a new and useful method that is not purely a mathematical algorithm. Consider, for example, "determining accelerated stress testing data ..." as recited in independent claims 1, 21 and 22. Such determining of accelerated stress testing data could include the physical acts of applying various stress regimens to a product. See, for example, the second paragraph on page 7 of the present specification, wherein it is described how multiple axis vibrational tests, rapid temperature transitions, high/low temperature limits, voltage margining and the like may be applied to a product to determine its stress limits. Accordingly, the rejected claims recite statutory subject matter. Withdrawal of the rejection under 35 USC 101 is therefore respectfully requested.

Section 112

Claim 14 was rejected under 35 USC 112. Claim 14 has been canceled.

Section 102

Claims 1-4, 6, 10 and 21 were rejected under 35 USC 102(a) as being anticipated by Analog Device's Reliability Handbook, pp. 1-23 out of 86 pages, © 2000 (assumed Dec. 31, 2000 by the Examiner) (hereafter, "RH").

The Applicant respectfully traverses. The rejected claims are allowable over RH for at least the reason that RH does not disclose the relationship $t_F = A_F \times \exp(t_A)$ as required by independent claims 1 and 21.

The Examiner points to equation (1) on page 11 of RH as corresponding to the claimed relationship. The Applicant respectfully disagrees. The alleged equivalent

formula, t_1/t_2 , is simply a linear ratio. The claimed relationship, by contrast, is a non-linear function of time. The two are not equivalent.

Accordingly, claims 1 and 21 are allowable over RH. Claims 2-4, 6 and 10 are likewise allowable over RH for at least the reasons that they include the features of claim 1 by dependency thereon. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-4, 6, 10 and 21 as anticipated by RH is therefore respectfully requested.

Section 103

Claims 7 and 22 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over RH in view of Military Standard MIL-STD-690C, March 26, 1993 (hereafter, "MIL"). The Applicant respectfully traverses. Claim 7 includes the recitations of claim 1 by dependency thereon; claim 22 is an independent claim reciting the relationship $t_F = AF \times \exp(t_A)$ discussed above. Claim 1 is allowable over RH as described above, and claim 22 is likewise allowable over RH along similar lines. MIL does not remedy the deficiencies in RH with respect to claims 1 and 22. Accordingly, claims 1 and 22 are allowable over RH and MIL, and claim 7 is likewise allowable over RH and MIL for at least the reason that it includes the recitations of claim 1. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 7 and 22 as being unpatentable over RH and MIL is therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 5, 8 and 9 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over RH in view of Hobbs (Hobbs, Gregg, "What HALT and HASS Can Do For Your Products", © 1997, Nelson Publishing) (hereafter, "Hobbs"). The Applicant respectfully traverses. Claims 5, 8 and 9 include the recitations of claim 1 by dependency thereon. Claim 1 is allowable over RH as described above, and Hobbs does not remedy the deficiencies in RH with respect to claim 1. Accordingly, claim 1 is allowable over RH and Hobbs. Therefore, claims 5, 8 and 9 are likewise allowable over RH and Hobbs for at least the reason that they includes the recitations of claim 1. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 5, 8 and 9 as being unpatentable over RH and Hobbs is therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 11-13 and 15-20 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over RH in view of Hobbs in view of Official Notice.

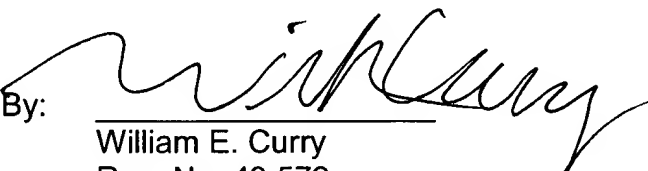
Withdrawal of the asserted rejection is respectfully requested. The claims depend on claim 1 and therefore are allowable over RH for at least the reasons discussed in connection with claim 1. Hobbs does not cure the deficiencies in RH and therefore the claims are allowable over the combination of RH and Hobbs. Moreover, the Applicant traverses the taking of Official Notice and requests the furnishing of documentary evidence of the allegedly well-known subject matter. The Applicant respectfully submits that it is not capable of instant and unquestionable demonstration as being well-known that accelerated stress testing of a previous design is "the only way to determine if changes in design resulted in improved or degraded test results," as alleged by the Examiner.

Conclusion

In light of the above discussion, Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in all aspects in allowable condition, and earnestly solicits favorable reconsideration and early issuance of a Notice of Allowance.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (202) 220-4323 to discuss any matter concerning this application. The Office is authorized to charge any fees related to this communication to Deposit Account No. 11-0600.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: APRIL 11, 2005 By: 
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